

## City of Cambridge Recycling Advisory Committee

June 15, 2006 Meeting Notes, Taken by Cathy McCormick

**Members Present:** Judy Nathans, Cambridge resident; Rob Gogan, Harvard University; Shaunna Schiller, FCR-Boston; David Johnston, Cambridge Housing Authority; Cathy McCormick; Adam Mitchell, Save That Stuff

**Guests Present:** Kelly Dunn, Recycling Program Manager; Randi Mail, Recycling Director; Sandy Mulkern, USG/Gypsum Recycling America

### Market Update

Paper, mediocre; plastics down; aluminum high.

### Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRA) conference

Judy and Randi reported on topics covered at the recent NRRA conference held in Nashua June 5-6<sup>th</sup>. NRRA is a non-profit a co-op among other services, markets recyclable materials for its members. Cambridge has been considering joining the NRRA, primarily to market white goods and scrap metal. NRRA membership for Cambridge would be \$1000/year.

Shauna said there are some risks with NRAA. When market is down they sometimes won't pick up. Make sure we have an agreement. Rob said NRAA is great but designed for rural municipalities. If price is low they will reject items. Do not underestimate the value of convenience of a local and forgiving vendor.

For more info see [www.recyclewithus.org](http://www.recyclewithus.org).

Notable speakers at the conference include:

- ✓ Gary Liss from California reported on zero waste strategies, see [www.garyliss.com](http://www.garyliss.com).
- ✓ Bob Kenney from the Nova Scotia Department of Environment & Labour talked about reducing waste through legal initiatives creating "producer responsibility" for manufacturers to help defray municipal recycling costs as well as additional fees for landfills that get directed back to waste reduction programs. The additional \$20-40 trash fees yield \$8 million dollars annually. Ontario taxes materials that are less recyclable, e.g., Styrofoam. Nova Scotia has a 50% recycling rate, with curbside organics as a major feature of the program being collected weekly in split packer with

recycling and trash picked up every other week in the 2<sup>nd</sup> compartment. See [www.gov.ns.ca/enla/waste/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/waste/) for more info.

- ✓ Ted Siegler and Natalie Staff from DSM Environmental talked about single stream recycling and climate change. There are different collection approaches. One example, San Jose, CA has a 64% recycling rate, population 850,000.

It's more important than ever to connect recycling and climate change. Consider hauling distances, truck efficiency, and methane emission savings by composting.

- ✓ RecycleBank ([www.recyclebank.com](http://www.recyclebank.com)) presented about their pilot project in Philadelphia. Recycling is single stream, participants are given toters with bar codes that is recorded by the recycling truck. The amount a given home recycles is translated into RecycleBank Dollars that can be spent at participating stores. It is unclear how the program would be paid for in Cambridge since there is a per household. Shaunna said that communities must go single stream to participate and that guarantees trash tonnage will decrease and recycling will increase. One way to pay for the program is to split avoided tip fees 50/50.

In recent years, Cambridge has earned about \$200,000 in recycling revenues each year. Single stream with toters are all households would be difficult in Cambridge due to density, on street parking, narrow streets and overhead wires and trees. These factors present real challenges to tip toters on every street.